

Claims

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A guidance process of maintaining goals in a system
with at least first and second goal types so as to
promote goal alignment, the guidance process comprising:
providing a first rule for relationships
between goals of the first goal type;
10 providing a second rule for relationships
between goals of the first goal type and goals of the
second goal type; and
determining content for a user interface, based
on the first and second rules, such that the content
15 facilitates goal alignment.
2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
activating a wizard that facilitates goal
modification, wherein:
20 determining content for user interfaces
comprises automatically customizing content for a screen
capable of being displayed by the wizard, based on at
least one of the first rule and the second rule.

3. The method of Claim 2, further comprising:

activating the wizard in response to a request
from a user to modify a goal;

prompting the user to select a team to be
5 associated with the goal from a drop-down list of teams;
and

prompting the user to select a parent goal for
the goal from a list showing all team goals linked to the
selected team.

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4. The method of Claim 3, further comprising:

in response to modification of the goal,
automatically determining whether a child goal exists for
the goal; and

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in response to determining that the child goal
does exist, automatically flagging the child goal to
cause a user interface for an owner of that child goal to
indicate that the child goal should be checked for
alignment.

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5. The method of Claim 4, further comprising:

determining that the owner has verified the
alignment of the child goal; and

in response to determining that the owner has
25 verified the alignment, automatically unflagging the
child goal.

6. The method of Claim 5, wherein determining content
for user interfaces comprises automatically flagging the
30 goal for supervisory approval in response to determining
that the user has a supervisor.

7. The method of Claim 6, wherein determining content for user interfaces comprises:

5 populating objects for a graphical user
interface with alignment information and warnings; and
 providing connections to tools for checking
alignment.

10 8. The method of Claim 7, wherein populating objects
for a graphical user interface with alignment information
and warnings comprises specifying an appearance for at
least one of a manager warning object, a feedback warning
object, and an alignment warning object.

15 9. The method of Claim 8, wherein specifying an
appearance for at least one of a manager warning object,
a feedback warning object, and an alignment warning
object comprises highlighting the alignment warning
object in response to determining that the parent goal
20 has been modified.

10. The method of Claim 8, wherein specifying an
appearance for at least one of a manager warning object,
a feedback warning object, and an alignment warning
25 object comprises highlighting the manager warning object
in response to determining that a supervisor has provided
feedback pertaining to the goal.

11. The method of Claim 7, wherein:

providing connections to tools for checking
alignment comprises providing an alignment warning
object; and

5 the method further comprises displaying an
interface for viewing the parent goal, in response to
selection of the alignment warning object.

12. The method of Claim 7, wherein determining content
10 for user interfaces further comprises providing an
evaluation status object that indicates whether a
supervisor has evaluated the goal.

13. The method of Claim 12, wherein determining content
15 for user interfaces further comprises providing an
evaluation summary object that reflects evaluation
results relating to at least one of importance and
effectiveness of the goal.

14. ✓ A method for managing goals, the method comprising:

storing at least first and second goals;

storing a relationship between the first goal
and the second goal;

5 detecting modification of the first goal; and
in response to detecting modification of the
first goal, facilitating goal alignment by causing the
second goal to be automatically highlighted for alignment
verification.

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15. The method of Claim 14, wherein facilitating goal
alignment comprises:

in response to detecting modification of the
first goal, automatically recognizing the second goal as
15 requiring alignment verification, based on the stored
relationship; and

wherein causing the second goal to be
automatically highlighted is performed in response to
recognizing the second goal as requiring alignment
20 verification.

16. / A method for automatically providing notification of changes to goals in a goal management system, the method comprising:

- 5 storing an owner for a first goal in a data processing system;
- storing a parent link relating the first goal to a parent goal in the data processing system;
- detecting modification of the parent goal;
- in response to detecting modification of the parent goal, automatically recognizing the first goal as requiring alignment verification, based on the parent link; and
- 10 in response to recognizing the first goal as requiring alignment verification, causing the first goal to be highlighted for alignment verification in a display associated with the owner of the first goal.

17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the first goal is highlighted in further response to receiving a request
20 from the owner of the first goal to display one or more goals.

18. The method of Claim 16, further comprising permitting each goal to be linked to no more than one
25 parent goal.

19. A method for automatically soliciting feedback for changes to goals in a goal management system, the method comprising:

5 storing a reporting link that relates a reporting individual and a supervisor to whom the reporting individual reports directly;

storing a team owned by the reporting individual;

10 detecting storage of a goal relating to the team by the reporting individual; and

causing the goal to be automatically highlighted for approval in a display associated with the supervisor, based on the reporting link relating the reporting individual and the supervisor.

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20. The method of Claim 19, wherein the goal is automatically highlighted for approval in response to creation of the goal.

20 21. The method of Claim 19, wherein the goal is automatically highlighted for approval in response to modification of the goal.

22. The method of Claim 19, wherein the goal is
25 automatically highlighted for approval in response to creation of the reporting link.

23. The method of Claim 19, wherein the goal is
30 automatically highlighted for approval in response to a request from the supervisor to display one or more goals.

25. The method of Claim 19, wherein one owner is named

26. The method of Claim 19, wherein:

the goal is a team goal; and

only the owner is permitted to manage the team

10 goal.

27. ✓ A method for keeping relationships between goals in
a goal management system consistent with relationships
between teams, the method comprising:

5 linking a first goal with a first team; and
 allowing a child goal of the first goal to be
linked with a second team only if the second team is a
child team of the first team.

10 28. The method of Claim 27, wherein each team has no
more than one parent team.

15 29. The method of Claim 27, further comprising importing
at least a third team into the goal management system
from a personnel database.

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30. ✓ A method for restricting links between goals based on team membership, the method comprising:

storing a team having a team owner and one or more team members;

5 storing a team goal having a link to the team; and

allowing a team-related goal that is linked to the team goal to be stored only if the team related goal has a goal owner who is one of the one or more team
10 members.

31. The method of Claim 30, further comprising storing a personal goal that is not linked to any team goals or team-related goals.

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32. A method for managing goals according to Claim 30,
the method further comprising:

storing an owner for a first goal;
storing a parent link relating the first goal
5 to a parent goal;
detecting modification of the parent goal;
in response to detecting modification of the
parent goal, automatically recognizing the first goal as
requiring alignment verification, based on the parent
10 link; and
in response to recognizing the first goal as
requiring alignment verification, causing the first goal
to be highlighted for alignment verification in a display
associated with the owner of the first goal.

33. A method for managing goals according to Claim 32,
the method further comprising:

storing a reporting link that relates a
reporting individual and a supervisor to whom the
20 reporting individual reports directly;
storing a team owned by the reporting
individual;
detecting storage of third goal relating to the
team by the reporting individual; and
25 causing the goal to be automatically
highlighted for approval in a display associated with the
supervisor, based on the reporting link relating the
reporting individual and the supervisor.

34. A method for managing goals according to Claim 33,
the method further comprising:

linking a fourth goal with a first team; and

allowing a child goal of the fourth goal to be

5 linked with a second team only if the second team is a
child team of the first team.

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35. A method for managing goals, the method comprising:
creating first and second goals for storage in
a goal management system;
modifying the first goal;
5 transmitting the modified first goal to the
goal management system for storage; and
receiving instructions to highlight the second
goal as requiring alignment verification.

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means for recording and modifying relationships

5 between the goals; and

means for automatically highlighting at least one of the goals in response to modification of a related goal to facilitating verification and modification of goal alignment.

37. A program product for managing goals within an organization, the program product comprising:

computer instructions that:

store an owner for a first goal;

5 store a parent link relating the first goal to a parent goal;

detect modification of the parent goal; and

in response to modification of the parent goal, utilize the parent link to cause the first goal to be
10 automatically highlighted for alignment verification in a display associated with the owner of the first goal; and
a computer-usable medium encoding the computer instructions.

15 38. The program product of Claim 37, wherein the computer instructions cause the first goal to be automatically highlighted for alignment verification in further response to a request from the owner of the first goal to display one or more goals.

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39. The program product of Claim 37, wherein the computer instructions permit each goal to be linked to no more than one parent goal.

40. A program product for managing goals within an organization, the program product comprising:

computer instructions that:

store a reporting link that relates a reporting
5 individual and a supervisor to whom the reporting individual reports directly;

store a team owned by the reporting individual;
detect storage of a goal for the team by the reporting individual; and

10 cause the goal to be automatically highlighted for approval in a display associated with the supervisor, based on the reporting link relating the reporting individual and the supervisor; and

a computer-usable medium encoding the computer
15 instructions.

41. The program product of Claim 40, wherein the computer instructions cause the goal to be automatically highlighted in response to detecting creation of the
20 goal.

42. The program product of Claim 40, wherein the computer instructions cause the goal to be automatically highlighted in response to detecting modification of the
25 team goal.

43. The program product of Claim 40, wherein the computer instructions cause the goal to be automatically highlighted in response to detecting linkage of the
30 reporting individual and the supervisor.

44. The program product of Claim 40, wherein the computer instructions cause the goal to be automatically highlighted in response to receiving a request from the supervisor to display one or more goals.

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45. The program product of Claim 40, wherein computer instructions permit each reporting individual to be linked to no more than one supervisor.

10 46. The program product of Claim 40, wherein computer instructions require one owner to be named for each team.

47. The program product of Claim 46, wherein the computer instructions allow only the owner to store goals
15 for each team.

48. ✓ A program product for managing goals within an organization, the program product comprising:

computer instructions that:

link a first goal with a first team; and

5 allow a child goal of the first goal to be linked to a second team only if the second team is a child team of the first team; and

a computer-usable medium encoding the computer instructions.

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49. The program product of Claim 48, wherein the computer instructions permit each team to have no more than one parent team.

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50. A program product for managing team goals and team-related goals within an organization, the program product comprising:

computer instructions that:

5 store a team having a team owner and one or more team members;

store a team goal having a link to the team;

and

10 allow a team-related goal that is linked to the team goal to be stored only if the team-related goal has a goal owner who is one of the one or more team members; and

a computer-usable medium encoding the computer instructions.

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51. The program product of Claim 50, wherein the computer instructions also store a personal goal that is not linked to any team goals or team-related goals.

52. /A system for managing goals, the system comprising:

processing resources that:

store an owner for a first goal;

store a parent link relating the first goal to

5 a parent goal;

detect modification of the parent goal;

in response to detecting modification of the
parent goal, automatically recognize the first goal as
requiring alignment verification, based on the parent

10 link; and

in response to recognizing the first goal as
requiring alignment verification, cause the first goal to
be highlight for alignment verification in a display
associated with the owner of the first goal.

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53. /A system for managing goals, the system comprising:

processing resources that:

store a reporting link that relates a reporting
individual and a supervisor to whom the reporting

20 individual reports directly;

store a team owned by the reporting individual;

detect storage of a goal relating to the team
by the reporting individual; and

cause the goal to be automatically highlighted
25 for approval in a display associated with the supervisor,
based on the reporting link relating the reporting
individual and the supervisor.

link a first goal with a first team; and

link a child goal of the first goal with a

processing resources that:

store a team having a team owner and one or

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store a team goal having a link to the team;
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allow a team-related goal that is linked to the

to be stored only if the team-related goal has